

Tewa Women United Work Plan: Environmental Justice Small Grants Program

I. Project Title and Project Purpose Statement

- **Title for the project:** Adapting to Climate Change: Española Edible Food Forest
- **A summary description of the proposed project including the goals the project seeks to achieve:** Our project will educate tribal and rural communities in Northern New Mexico to understand environmental, public health, and climate change issues related to one of our most vital resources, Water. We will educate about local strategies to maintain clean and safe water supplies by demonstrating how traditional dry land farming techniques can be combined with contemporary strategies to improve water use efficiency and adapt to climate change. The project, developed by community members, is a collaborative effort between local schools, organizations and government. Tewa Women United has partnered with the City of Española for an Edible Food Forest terrace garden project. Specific project goals are: 1) Demonstrate wise use of water and water harvesting; 2) Educate our community on sustainable gardening methods as a tool for adapting to climate change.
- **Location of where the project will take place:** Española, New Mexico, 87532
- **Related statutes from the list in Section I.C: Safe Drinking Water Act, Section 1442I (3)**
- **Community climate resiliency focus:** Building community capacity to address climate change vulnerabilities and develop solutions to protect a vulnerable community's water supply.

II. Environmental, Public Health and Community Climate Resiliency in Our Community

- **The local environmental, public health and climate resiliency issues our project will address:** Water resources are vital to New Mexico and Tribal communities. We depend upon Clean and Safe Water for our survival, and already experience health disparities. As described in "Potential Effects of Climate Change on New Mexico" (Agency Technical Work Group, New Mexico State Environment Department, 2005), climate models project substantial changes in New Mexico's climate over the next fifty to one hundred years, if no measures are taken to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. The potential impacts of climate change disproportionately affect communities of color and low-income communities. These are issues of environmental justice. Warmer temperatures result in higher evaporation rates that exacerbate effects of drought. Water supply systems which have no storage, like our traditional acequia systems, suffer seasonal shortages in summer. We are facing drier winters, years of drought, more wildfires and increased public health risks. Our communities have limited resources available to adapt and cope with these issues. Our traditional lifeway systems (farming, grazing, hunting) are vulnerable to environmental harms and climate change.

- **Results of our efforts to address local environmental, public health and climate issues:** The Tewa Women United (TWU) Environmental Justice (EJ) program advocated for, maintained, and monitored policies through public comment pressure on compliance with 2005 NMED consent order agreement, storm water, groundwater, open burn, hazardous waste, WIPP, and TA 50 and 54 permit processes. We engaged community members to provide public comment at the City of Santa Fe resolution regarding cleanup of Los Alamos National Laboratories (LANL) TA 54 and Area G, and testimony at LANL permit meetings. We built community capacity and leadership development through our intergenerational Tres Rios/P'o Poje Geh Environmental

Justice community group specializing in art through activism. For the past eighteen years we have hosted the annual Gathering For Mother Earth and Spañapalooza youth events to share information and practices regarding environmental health. We were part of collaboration that resulted in Designation of Northern sections of the Rio Grande River as a national monument.

• **Characteristics of our community, demographics, geographic location, and history:** Our community is the diverse tribal and non tribal communities located in Northern New Mexico. These include the Eight Northern Pueblos (Picuris, Taos, Ohkay Owingeh, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Nambe, Pojoaque, and Tesuque) that lie within the geographic boundaries of Taos, Rio Arriba and northern Santa Fe counties. These counties include a high percentage of rural, low income, and underserved families and individuals. Some come from families who have lived in the area for generations. Others are recent immigrants. Small orchards and farms are all that remain of an extensive agricultural system that centuries ago provided plentiful crops of many varieties of fruits, vegetables, grains, and herbs, with harvests running from July through October. The steep mountain valleys and rolling plains of our beautiful ancestral lands, drained by mountain streams that feed small rivers that in turn join the Río Grande and flow through what is known now as the Española Valley, have witnessed tragic declines in air, land, and water quality. Inequalities of power have negatively impacted the environmental and reproductive health of our land and peoples, and devastated our farming landscape. In 1943 the United States government and military weapons industry seized lands as the site for Los Alamos National Laboratories (LANL), home of the world's first nuclear weapon of mass destruction. As peoples whose spiritual and cultural identity is tied to ecological systems, the imposition of LANL caused severe disruption to the natural balance and was another link in the chain of historical trauma that started with Spanish colonization. Community members, especially our youth, are no longer connected to the land and water and lack opportunities for empowerment and being part of local strategies to maintain a clean and safe environment.

• **How the affected community may be disproportionately impacted by the environmental, public health and community climate resiliency harms and risks:** Our ancestral homelands include the Pajarito Plateau and Jemez Mountains located in northern New Mexico. This land is revered as sacred to our people. It contains sacred sites and has sacred land usage. LANL is surrounded by four Pueblos. San Ildefonso and Santa Clara Pueblo sit adjacent to LANL, both downwind and downstream. We are at risk for discharge of toxic and radioactive wastes. Recently, a sampling project was conducted in our homes to track contamination. Proof of major contaminants was found in our very own homes. As land based peoples, and low income communities of color, we have limited resources available to adapt and cope with the health and economic impacts of environmental risks. Our traditional Native American subsistence systems are vulnerable to environmental harms and climate change. We have already experienced how drought and high temperatures reduce the amount of food supplied by home gardens, upon which we have traditionally relied. Drought and the seasonal shift in snowmelt runoff to earlier in the spring may seriously impact agricultural production in our Native American and Hispanic communities in northern New Mexico that are dependent on acequia systems. Recent wildfires and floods have had a disproportionate impact on our low income households. Our older housing structures are not equipped for efficient water and energy use.

- **How the affected community will benefit from the results of the project:** The Española Edible Food Forest terrace garden project will engage more than 100 local and indigenous community members and share information with community leaders. The populations of low and middle income Native, Hispanic and Anglo populations that make up the Española Valley and surrounding Pueblo communities will have access to expanded community resources regarding water use, climate resiliency, and sustainable agricultural practices. Additional project benefits include reducing erosion damage, which the city has dealt with on an annual basis and beautifying a city park with an edible, herbal landscape for the enjoyment and health of the community. The project will expand knowledge to help ensure our farming heritage as a tool for adapting to climate change.

III. Organization's Historical Connection to the Affected Community

- **History of our involvement, including length and how we became involved:** TWU is a collective of intertribal, multicultural women who reside in the Tewa Pueblo homelands of northern New Mexico. The organization started in 1989 as a safe space where we created, transformed and empowered one another through critical analysis and by embracing and reaffirming our cultural identity. In 2001 TWU transitioned from an informal, all-volunteer group into a formal nonprofit organization for educational, social and benevolent purposes. Our mission is to provide safe spaces for Indigenous women to uncover the power, strength and skills we possess to become positive forces for social change in our families and communities. As Native women leaders, we work to reduce harmful environmental impacts, strengthen families, reduce poverty, and address the root causes of many health and social justice disparities. The spirit of TWU is embodied in the Tewa concept of wo watsi, "the breath/spirit of our work." Our heart's breath guides our path of life into our daily work. Our breath is our commitment to live life as a prayer and to view life as a cycle, knowing that what we do with unconditional love is exponentially honoring all. Our work over the past 25 years and our commitment to the earth, air and water of our native lands has identified us as uniquely situated with our tribal communities. It is because of our commitment to the sacredness of the air land and water that we continue our community engagement struggles. Youth are our future and deserve to live in health. WE ARE THE AFFECTED COMMUNITY.

- **How we have worked with community residents and organizations to address local environmental, public health issues and community climate resiliency:** We believe in building beloved families and communities to end violence against women, girls and Mother Earth. Tewa Women United comes from the Tewa words wi don gi mu, which translates to "we are one". The spirit of our work is embodied in the Tewa concept of wo watsi: with our breath is our commitment to live life as a prayer and view life as a cycle knowing that what we do and give comes back. Therefore we should move in this world with generosity and a life affirming reciprocity. We bring the voices of people of color to local, national, and International networks and coalitions in order to build community capacity and leadership development. Our EJ efforts have mobilized community members to provide public comment on issues such as Environmental Impact Statements, maintenance of the Clean Water Act Settlement, LANL permitting, food justice, and other local issues. We participated in community discussions and

testimony about accountability in response to the LANL Report on Chromium vi clean up. TWU is part of a network of organizations representing river, spiritual, and acequia groups that work towards social transformation through the *Protecting Those Most Vulnerable Campaign*- When we protect those most vulnerable and our Mother Earth, we protect us all.

- **How the residents of the affected community are part of the decision-making process:** Environmental Justice has been defined by our community as, “Our Commitment to honor and protect the rights of ourselves, our habitat, and the fair treatment of all living things.” Community members are involved in planning our permaculture education, food security and sustainability projects. The concept of the Edible Food Forest grew out of a series of EJ focus groups identifying priorities for protecting the environment, and was moved forward by a group of young mothers who saw the need for improving community education. The site chosen for the project is supported by The Care Coalition for Northern Families, an area network of early childhood stakeholders that has prioritized improving families’ access to parks.

- **How our efforts have increased the community’s capacity to address local environmental, public health issues and community climate resiliency:** We are part of local, state, national, and international networks that seek fair treatment and meaningful involvement of communities of color in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. We have increased local awareness of environmental issues and provided a forum for networking and education between members of affected communities, built community engagement and increased involvement to participate in the National Environmental Policy Act process. We have increased community capacity to advocate for a change in environmental safety standards to acknowledge that females are at higher risk than males of getting cancer from the same dose of radiation, and that contamination such as tritium in the radioactive water regularly released from nuclear industries is among the few toxins that can cross placental boundaries, posing risks of birth defects and pregnancy failures. There is an increase in self-determination as our community groups engage in growing their own food, and saving heirloom seed in the face of encroachment by genetically modified seeds. Our efforts have contributed to preservation, protection, and providing sustainability models.

- **How we maintain and sustain an ongoing relationship with our affected community’s residents and organizations:** TWU is a collective of intertribal women’s voices who are multi-cultural, multi-racial and reside in the Tewa homelands of Northern New Mexico. TWU sustains relationships with residents through our ongoing outreach and community events and through the services of our four program components (Youth Education, Reproductive and Birth Justice, Sexual Violence Prevention, and Environmental Justice). We are part of a larger justice movements to enact social change through empowerment. We actively partner with organizations such as Rights of Nature, Communities for Clean Water (a network of organizations representing river, spiritual, and acequia groups), Las Mujeres Hablan (a network of women-led community organizations in New Mexico), The New Mexico Food and Seed Sovereignty Alliance, Green For All, Honor Our Pueblo Existence, First Indigenous Environment Collaborative, and Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women.

IV. Project Description

i) A concise description of the activities the project will undertake during the year to examine and address the environmental and public health issue

• **The local environmental, public health and community climate resiliency results our project seeks to achieve:** TWU has partnered with the City of Española for an Edible Food Forest terrace garden project. Our project will educate tribal and rural communities in Northern New Mexico to understand environmental, public health, and climate change issues related to one of our most vital resources, Water. We will educate on local strategies to maintain clean and safe water supplies by demonstrating how traditional dry land farming techniques can be combined with contemporary strategies to improve water use efficiency and adapt to climate change. The Edible Food Forest terrace garden will be located in public space and demonstrate an approach to building consensus and setting community priorities to ensure clean water, community empowerment and grass roots support for sustainable agricultural practices with improved water use efficiency. This unique cross-cultural project will be a model for future collaboration between city and tribal entities to share knowledge and resources regarding agricultural traditions, water efficiencies, and adapting to climate change. The important shifts we seek are to increase local awareness of environmental issues and provide a forum for networking and education to build community engagement for local environmental, public health and climate resiliency issues, as well as direct involvement in community garden and food justice initiatives, self-education, public comment, and environmental advocacy. We will have integrated permaculture education workshops into community work days during planting and construction phases. The garden will be accessible to the local community to enjoy and interact with fruit trees, seasonal food, medicinal herbs, accessible pathways, aesthetic beauty and shade. It will have been built to solve the erosion problem on the hillside, while capturing and harvesting precious rainwater.

• **How the project will achieve these results:** TWU will educate, empower and enable the community to understand the environmental, public health and community climate resiliency as indicated in the following goals and timeline for activities. We will collect data, such as # of Community collaborative partnerships, # of Participants in community work days and community education events, List of community volunteers (adults and youth), Types and amounts of donated plants and materials, and Results of pre and post intervention surveys to evaluate success as described in the Performance Measures attachment.

Goals 1) Demonstrate wise use of water and water harvesting; Goal 2) Educate our community on sustainable gardening methods as a tool for adapting to climate change

June-August 2015

1. Announce EPA funding award to partners and community members;
2. Establish regular planning meetings for partners and volunteers to coordinate tasks and responsibilities;
3. Finalize design of the garden;
4. Purchase equipment and supplies needed to implement traditional dry-land farming techniques and permaculture principles;

5. Assist in coordination and sampling of site to test for soil toxins, soil PH, and type;
6. Coordinate and organize partners to begin construction of earthworks;
7. Solicit donations of trees, plants, and natural materials needed for site development;
8. Collaborate and organize within farming community to ensure the use of Native trees, non-GMO seeds, and sustainable gardening practices;
9. Begin gathering/storing materials for garden implementation.

September-November 2015

10. Coordinate and organize partners for garden “work days” as free community workshops on permaculture design;
11. Pick up donated native fruit trees and plants to create sustainable guilds in terrace garden;
12. Organize and coordinate community workdays and workshops to plant the terrace garden after terraces have settled;
13. Organize and coordinate community workdays and workshops to maintain and establish drip irrigation system and garden;
14. Conduct on-site community education events to increase understanding of the intersections between access to healthy food and water, climate change, environmental justice;
15. Train City staff during installation and implementation to help you gain a general understanding of the garden watering system and minimal annual maintenance.

December 2015-February 2016

16. Engage elders in sharing knowledge and experience in agricultural traditions;
17. Recruit additional volunteers and incorporate into work schedule;

March-June 2016

18. Identify permaculture education topics and schedule with appropriate workday events
19. Identify and implement strategies to consistently share information and coordinate with community members, city, and tribal leadership, and other project partners;
20. Publicize project successes, lessons learned, and replication strategies to promote expansion into additional locations;
21. Engage community members to advocate for community gardens as policy development to promote access to healthy foods and water efficient practices;
22. Facilitate community event to celebrate the project’s one year completion.

• **How the organization’s efforts will increase the community’s capacity to address local environmental, public health and community climate resiliency issues:** These efforts will build momentum toward agriculture adapted to climate change. There is definitely potential to expand this initial work. With sustained resources, we can expand the model to include additional City, County and Tribal administration buildings. The project will also move us closer

to manifesting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) definition of “environmental justice” as “the *fair treatment* and *meaningful involvement* of all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” Residents of our affected community will increase their knowledge about water use and climate resiliency, and will have increased opportunities to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect our environment and health.

•How the project is related to the environmental statutes you identified in your Threshold Eligibility Form (see Section I.C and Appendix A). Please note each project must include activities that are authorized by one of the federal environmental statutes listed in Section I.C.: By demonstrating the wise use and conservation of water, our project is related to the Safe Drinking Water Act, Section 1442I (3), relating to the public health aspects of providing safe drinking water. Our project will demonstrate principles of water sustainability, such as using nearby water sources where available, including rain harvesting. It will use education and outreach to encourage efficiencies. It is part of local collaborative efforts in planning to build resiliency for climate change impacts on our water infrastructure and water quality.

ii) A concise description of how the organization and its partner(s) will work together during the year to address the local issue(s).

• The role of our partners in addressing the local environmental, public health and community climate resiliency issues: Our partners are involved in addressing issues through their specific program perspectives. The New Mexico Acequia Association promotes traditional agriculture and wise water use. The Santa Fe Indian School has an agricultural program that involves students in permaculture activities. The Española Farmer’s Market is committed to expanding local farming. The Española Community Service Committee seeks opportunities for court ordered individuals to meet community service requirements. Other partners and their interests are described in the next section. The project requires support and involvement from the City of Española, whose responsibilities are listed as primary partner.

• The nature of the organizations, and what resources they bring to the partnership: Our environmental networks, such as Las Mujeres Hablan, tribal newsletters, The Care Coalition for Northern Families, the Española Farmer’s Market, and the New Mexico Acequia Association will help publicize the project, work days, and community education events. Area schools, the Santa Fe Indian School, food exchanges, and permaculture organizations will help solicit donations, grow plant starters in their greenhouses and recruit volunteers. The Sostenga commercial food kitchen and greenhouse will provide access to its facilities and products. The Española Community Service Committee will include community work days as approved court ordered service activities. The City of Española, as primary partner, will be closely involved in accomplishing the project timeline.

• How the partner(s) has a vested interest in working with this partnership [other than just getting income], commitments made, and specific activities it will be responsible for: Many of

the listed partners are within a one-mile radius of the project site and their involvement is part of benefitting the community and their organization goals. Please see the previous section for a list of their commitments and activities. Our primary partner, the City of Española has a vested interest in the site, as it is adjacent to City Hall and erosion problems have incurred expenses for remediation. Specific activities of the City, approved by the Council, include:

1. Provide support as needed in working with the City Council;
2. Cover the cost of soil sampling of site if these resources are not available for free;
3. Assist with procurement of and designate space for temporary storage of building materials which may include piles of stone, wooden beams/posts, compost, manure, and mulch;
4. Provide available small scale machinery and operators for moving dirt and building supplies;
5. Help with project costs to cover what is not donated;
6. Provide annual maintenance of watering system as needed.

• **How we plan to maintain and sustain the partnerships:** We will have regular meetings to coordinate the project, planting, maintenance and upkeep. We will also form a social media group and communicate about work days and other events through facebook and email.

V. Organizational Capacity and Programmatic Capability

• **The organizational and administrative systems the organization has in place that will be used to appropriately manage, expend, and account for Federal funds:** We follow standard accounting practices and our annual audits have had no findings. Our practices include 1)Funds are maintained and tracked in separate accounts coded by funding source; 2)Policies for Accounting Procedures are in writing; 3)Inventory system maintained by Certified Public Accountant; 4)Separate tracking of grant draw-downs and expenditures by uniquely identifying each grant within the accounting and reporting system; 5)Long term contract with a Certified Public Accountant to perform monthly bank reconciliations and monitor our system of internal controls; 6)Records retention policy in which records are kept for a minimum of 6 years and purged in compliance with organizational policy and federal recommendation; 7)Payroll records are retained according to IRS recommendations; 7)Past and current trainings for Executive Director and organization staff in Federal Fiscal Management guidelines.

• **How the applicant has successfully managed these projects in the past:** Successful projects include, but are not limited to, our Seed Exchange and Library, environmental justice youth groups, art through activism and annual Spañapalooza youth event, Gathering 4 Mother Earth, community permaculture workshops on various topics, community solar photovoltaic workshop and installation project in Santa Clara Pueblo, environmental justice events, World Water action day, and community gardens. Project management was done through bi-weekly meetings of EJ program staff to plan, monitor and track accomplishments according to identified scopes of work, regular communication with stakeholders and meeting coordination, and responding to issues as they are identified. Projects were organized into phases and seasonal priority, and whenever possible used local resources and permacultures principles.

- **How we plan to effectively manage and successfully complete this proposed project:** The Project Manager will track and monitor activities according to the Project Timeline and Performance Measures. Project Manager will work closely with partners and maintain active communication with stakeholders throughout different phases of project. Any unanticipated problems will be resolved by working with appropriate staff and project partners. The local agricultural community will be brought together to share in the ownership and outcomes of this project. Sponsorships will also be provided by community members and business owners to promote community ownership and involvement for upkeep and harvest.

- **Organizational experience to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project:** TWU has been developing programs and projects that build upon the cultural and linguistic strengths of the Pueblos and rural Hispanic communities we serve since 1996. All TWU programs are culturally-based and interweave modern intervention and prevention methodologies with traditional practices as part of a holistic approach to strengthening individuals and families. By following natural law and putting into practice the values of indigenous cultures, TWU gives breath to our work in ways that foster healthy relationships and nurture the spirit, energy, and cultural integrity of all peoples. Each program or project takes a holistic approach linked to our communities through circles of support. The networks that are connected to TWU are rich in agricultural knowledge and expertise. We will draw from collective expertise to ensure that goals are met in a community focused way.

- **The applicant, Tewa Women United, has not been a recipient of an EPA funding award in the last five years. We are currently recipients of two Federal grant/cooperative agreements for which we have successfully met requirements for progress and financial status reports with the following Project Officers and Agreements:** 1) Sarah Axelson- Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, Division of Adolescent Development and Support, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program # 90AT0004; 2) Kimberly Cortez, U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, Sexual Assault Services Program, Grants to Culturally Specific Programs # 2014-uw-ax-0018

VI. Qualifications of the Project Manager (PM)

- **The qualifications of the PM as they relate to the project:** Beata Tsosie-Peña is from Santa Clara Pueblo and El Rito, New Mexico. She has an AA and a BA degree in education. She is a poet, mother, farmer, and musician. She is certified in infant massage, as an educator, a developmental specialist, and in permaculture design. She is a Green For All Fellow, and has served on her local day school board of education. She is currently serving as chairperson for both Honor Our Pueblo Existence and Breath of My Heart Birth Place.

- **How the PM has ties to the community and/or organization:** Beata grew up and is raising her three children in the community. The realities of living next to a nuclear weapons complex has called her into environmental health and justice work with TWU. She believes in the sacredness of water, practice and preservation of land-based knowledge, spirituality, language, seeds, our Earth, and family. Her intentions are for healing, wellness and sustainability for future generations.

- **Past activities that the PM has worked on with the community:** Beata's work with our EJ Program has built momentum toward a safe environment and economic sustainability for a green economy with focus on agriculture such as community gardens and close involvement with local farmers markets. Examples of past activities include monthly meetings of an Environmental Justice Group for youth ages 16-25, and facilitation of a bi-monthly focus group to empower local community members and youth in order to address issues that directly impact the local populations in creative, proactive, and culturally relevant ways. She collaborates with local, national and international advocacy organizations, annual Seed Exchange and Library for local farmers, Santa Clara Pueblo Community Garden, the Española Farmers Market Community Garden. She is an active member of the Communities for Clean Water Coalition, which includes mentorship of a youth council.

VII. Past Performance in Reporting on Outputs and Outcomes

- **A list of any Federal or non-Federal grants or cooperative agreements (not Federal contracts) of similar size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project worked on within the past three (3) years:**

Although these are not EPA grants directly related to the proposed project, we are providing information on our current Federal grants- 1) # 90AT0004, Tribal PREP, \$192,681.00 (4 year project period), Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, Division of Adolescent Development and Support, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program; 2) # 2014-uw-ax-0018, Grants to Culturally Specific Programs, 150,000.00 (3 year project period), U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, Sexual Assault Services Program. Points of Contact are 1) Sarah Axelson; 2) Kimberly Cortez.

- **How we documented and reported on progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under prior and current assistance agreements:** We successfully made and reported on progress. Financial reports were documented according to policy and reported by the Executive Director with the help of our contract accountant according to funder requirements. Data was collected and program progress documented by Project Coordinators and reported by our Data and Reports Coordinator.

- **If you did not make any progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes, describe whether you have documentation and/or reports satisfactorily explaining why:** NA

VIII. Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) Information

- **Check Yes or No for each of the items provided below as it applies to your specific project.**

1. Your project will involve the collection of groundwater, **soil**, sediment, surface water, air, biota or fauna samples for chemical or biological analysis. **Yes**
2. Your project will use existing computer databases containing analytical data or personal information previously collected. **No**
3. Your project will use existing historical research pertaining to this project or proposal. **No**
4. Your project will implement deed searches for current property or site. **No**
5. Your project will conduct medical records search for the population covered in the grant. **No**
6. Your project will compile meteorological data to determine weather trends or air mixing trends. **No**
7. Your project will use existing statistical studies or will conduct these studies as part of the project. **No**
8. Your project will create a new database based on the information gathered. **No**
9. Your project will use this information for litigation purposes. **No**
10. Your project will use this information to make recommendations on environmental decisions. **Yes**